

## Christmas 2006

Aurora, December 3rd—*It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas*—finally! The freezing air just pushed in yesterday and a few snow flurries—enough to colour the grass mostly white—began today. Our front walk is lined with candy canes and lights, and our indoor decorations just appeared. Two train sets have been set up under the tree and Christmas music fills the house. Mary Beth is looking at Christmas cookie recipes for—believe it or not—a science/promotional advertising project for Robert. The Aurora night-time Santa Claus Parade was beautiful to watch last Saturday.



Michael is ready to turn 12 in a few weeks. He has been anxiously waiting to join the Canadian Army Cadets for boys and girls ages 12–18. He chose flute for his Grade 6 music class, so we bought him one. He has made good progress since September and will join the band at his first chance in January. Michael joined Safety Patrol to help with student drop-off in the morning. Being a server (acolyte) at church is very important to him, as well as singing in the church Youth Choir.



For about the last month, Robert has been officially a teenager! Where DID the time go? He, too, sings in Trinity's Youth Choir. Robert continues to play tenor saxophone and is in the Grade 7 band. He took a few private lessons in the fall, but continues to do very well on his own with help from his school music teacher. Robert is part of the school's Student Council this year and speaks once a month with two other students at the Parent Council meetings.

Main web page: [www.richardhess.com](http://www.richardhess.com)

As usual, Mary Beth keeps busy with her three boys (including Richard). She continues to do several odds and ends for the business most days as well as keeps up with the usual household duties. Mary Beth occasionally volunteers at the Historical Society, school, and church.

Richard has had an exciting year. We gave another tape restoration seminar in early May with three great attendees. He continues to be busy with tapes coming in on a regular basis and is currently looking at some larger, long-term commitments. The big news is that he spent a substantial amount of time talking with chemists and tape engineers and finally, with their help, figured out that cold playing of a tape can remove its tendency to squeal. He wrote a paper and drove to San Francisco in October to present it at the 121st Audio Engineering Society Convention. He came home with the Suburban full of tape machines and other audio parts. Our good friends Sue and Don Ososke were most generous in providing a place to stay near San Francisco and Richard had a great time with them. There have been no major upgrades to any technical systems this year other than increasing our main data storage capacity to 1,250 GB on triple-redundant hard drives.



In January, we visited Jay and Dick to help celebrate Richard's Father's 90th birthday! They looked good and we had a great time. We visited again in August (when the photo was taken) and then drove through western Pennsylvania to see the Horseshoe Curve and the Gallitzin Tunnels, historic engineering feats in the push westward from the early 1850s—still in use today. We then stopped at Johnstown to see the museum dedicated to the floods, with the most devastating one being in 1889, with additional disastrous flooding occurring in 1936 and 1977. We then headed west to Dayton, stopping in Steubenville, Ohio, to pick up some eBay "finds" of Richard's. In Dayton, we spent an evening and much of the next day at the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. All-in-all, quite an amazing display!

Tape restoration: [www.richardhess.com/tape/](http://www.richardhess.com/tape/)



Going home, we headed north and spent a couple of days with Mary Beth's cousin, Cathie, in Sarnia. This visit saw the boys swimming in Lake Huron and in Cathie's pool as well as a visit to a petting zoo and lots of time to catch up with family news.

Our folksinger-friend, Marie-Lynn Hammond fell off her horse at the end of August and although she is recovering well, her right eye may never function properly again. Many of her friends are putting together a benefit for her to help her financially. Our provincial "safety net" is good, but it doesn't cover lost income. At the urging of her sister, she sold her horse. Please see more about this and how you can help at [www.marielynnhammond.com](http://www.marielynnhammond.com). Thanks!

For the past six months or so, we have enjoyed "rent-a-dog". Mary Beth's brother, John, has been helping a friend raise a cockapoo. We sometimes dognap Italo (the name chosen by the owner, who is of Italian descent) and bring him here to enjoy for a few hours. It is a great way for the boys to experience a pet without the long-term commitment.

May you enjoy a happy and healthy holiday season and a great 2007!

With all of our love,

Mary Beth, Richard,  
Robert, & Michael Hess



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